

WHO IS JESUS, REALLY? | Core of Christianity: Relationship

Discussion Guide

God did not create machines to serve Him, but children to know Him. He loves us and wants relationship with us. But we humans are messy, and so our relationships are messy. Sometimes we see the holy light and person of God and are afraid of what may happen when our messiness is revealed, and it can make us want to hide in fear or shame. But God doesn't shy away from our mess, He instead invites us into deeper relationship with Him, loving us as we are. He is the source of all life, and it brings us great joy, peace, hope, and strength to be in His presence and to abide in Him. Our obedience to Him should be built on the trust we have in Him as our most intimate friend, not out of duty or fear of punishment.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you often think of God as wanting something from you?
2. Does it change your perspective if what He wants from you is just your attention and presence with Him?
3. Can you bring your troubles to God and have a real conversation with Him, even if you believe that He will not answer the way you wish?
4. Have you ever struggled with God? Do you feel comfortable sharing what He taught you and how it changed you since?
5. Are you seeking a boss who gives you blessings in exchange for obedience, or a relationship with someone who loves you unconditionally and who you trust enough to accept instruction from?

WEEKLY PRACTICE:

Read John 15 and intentionally connect with a friend by affirmation, delight, gratitude, and forgiveness.

Sermon Notes

John's 7 "I Am" statements:

I am the bread of life

I am the light of the world

I am the door

I am the good shepherd

I am the resurrection and the life

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

I am the true vine.

Jesus's most explicit message was in John 8:58: "‘Very truly I tell you,’ Jesus answered, ‘before Abraham was born, I am!’"

1 Corinthians 15:10, "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me."

John 15:1-11, "‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you

are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.'"